

MASAI CUSTOMS

289

giteg nabo, pe eramat, neaku
kumok, neitopok ol-lee, amu
eyamishore, neia 'n-gara,
neaku ol-karis te-ina-kiteg.

has a cow, which he look after and
tenda, it bears, and by so doing
enables him to live, for he can marry,
and have children, and thus become
rich. [233
181
[556]

Ore en-daa co-'n-glahu naa
'n-gujit; nanyur il-Maasoo 'n-
gujit, amu ninje en-daa co-'n-
glahu.

Now cattle feed on grass, and the
Masai love grass on this account. [824]

Ore Sahii ten eany eng-al
aha, nepwo 'Ngortyok aainiki
'n-gujit il-kilani pe etum
ataani eng-Ai.

Whenever there is a drought, the
women fasten grass on to their
clothes, and go and offer up prayers
to God. [824
824
[772]

Naa, ten tar ol-murani ol-
aynei te-shoo, neiguru ol-
aynei 'n-gujit aaiya, naa ten
odi ol-murani 'n-gujit
eibugita ol-aynei, nemeitiki
aar.

If a warrior beats a boy on the
grazing ground, the boy tears up
some grass, and when the warrior
sees that the child has grass in his
hand, he stops beating him.

Ore sii ten tarare 'l-Maasoo
'l-maigati, p' eiya neitaya o-
steva, neitaya 'n-gujit
itadaya.

Again, if the Masai fight with an
enemy, and wish to make peace, they
hold out some grass as a sign. [728]

Naa, ten erinyanya 'l-muran
te-'n-jura, pe egilaki 'l-otari-
shita, neililili, eibugita en-
dite eng-oti e-kulle napukurure
'n-gujit naanyuri.

Whenever warriors return from
a raid, and it is desired to praise
those who have killed some of the
enemy, a girl takes a small gourd of
milk, and having covered it with
green grass, sprinkles it over them. [703]

Naa, ten eidiari, neitakini
'nelein lo-gujit.

Then, if people move from one
kraal to another, they tie grass on to
the gourd.

Naa, ten eaiyeki ol-taigani
'n-gujit, nemeirak e-aiyeta,
naji: 'Ol-taitheni ilia, eaiyeta
'n-glahu.'

Should one man ask forgiveness of
another with grass in his hand and
his request be not attended to, it is
said that the man who refuses to
listen to his prayer is a Doobo, and
that he does not know about cattle. [627
[786]

Naa, ten eio ol-taigani waji,
pe eidi ol-ehani iturakine eng-

Again, if a man who is proceeding
on a journey a tree which has [484]

/76 cont./

561
701

According to this, the institution of the age classes together with the existence of the age grades, which were more sharply defined and made more prominent in their meaning by the former, seems so important for the maintenance of a constantly war-ready troop that the thought obtrudes as to whether that institution did not first become formed out of a striving for such a band of warriors.

• [103]

The warriors' living together as a valuable impetus for comradeship and esprit de corps, in which lies a chief condition for success in war, leads further to celibacy and then to free love; one can see as its sequel the women's society that belongs to an age class. This in turn then is the first step for mother right, of which, indeed, we also find remnants among the Masai.

X.

000

Introduction of the youths to the warrior life. -- Their first war expedition. -- The *ol siboni* gives them the name for the age class. -- Shield emblems: its individual constituent parts and their meaning. -- The youths become warriors.

701

702

561

[291]

[302]

[411]

As soon as the circumcision wound has healed, the circumcised exchange the long apron (*ol gelf*, *ol gelfai*) for the short skin-cape (*e megiri*, /77/ *megirin*), again put on their ornaments, anoint their bodies with red paint and, after they have once more shaved their heads, set out as *ol barnet* (sing. *ol barnet*, formed from *barno* = bald-headed), armed with spear, club, sword, and shield, into the bush to celebrate the *ol gural* | *ol gural*. Spear, shield, and sword are gifts from their fathers; they have carved the club themselves. As we shall learn later in connection with the warriors, they divide themselves into mess-groups of five or six. In the forest they erect

[342]

701

702

561

[291]

[302]

[411]

a kraal of theirs for themselves or even build small huts out of leaves. The festival consists of consuming large quantities of meat and nothing but meat! For this each participant furnishes a fat ox obtained from his father, which must be plain-colored, black if possible.

/81 cont./

714
531
613
[541]

The illustrations give the lineage emblems that the members of the aj meraturu age class carried before the livestock epidemics around the year 1890. It furthermore seems that even in the times in which the carrying of lineage emblems was customary they were not generally carried by all lineages, but only by those whose members predominated in number in the part of the country concerned. The practical utility of this mode of procedure was to keep constantly before the eyes of compatriots of other lineages the fact that these lineages were particularly strong and that therefore the individual belonging to them was entitled to a larger share of the spoils, in accordance with the principle: might makes right. The emblem of such a lineage was then also sometimes adopted by all the warriors of that part of the country.

714
531
• [705]

Those warriors who take the lead in battle, the aj nigilani, have the right to carry the emblem of heavey on their shields. This is the small colored emblem that is on the periphery of a longitudinal side and is to be found in Figures 9, 10, 12, 15, and 17 of Plate 1. It is still commonly used today.

[709]

The last emblem that may be included in the shield emblems is the one mentioned above as the section emblem. By section is to be understood here one of the many small divisions out of which the camp of a troop found on a war expedition is made up. In accordance with its secondary significance, the emblem is not very striking to the eye. A comparison of illustrations 11 and 12, Plate 1, shows an example. These represent the emblems of two shields whose owners belonged to one company and within it to different sections.

714
531
178

It is also to be mentioned that both the shield emblems as a whole and its individual constituent parts were probably always dependent on fashion and other circumstances of the moment. Sometimes simplicity was favored, sometimes garishness. Sometimes a close feeling of comradeship prevented the carrying of the class-forming lineage emblem, sometimes internal discord involving grounds of penal law or civil law called forth the opposite. The above-mentioned shield paintings of old men proved to me that the shield emblems of a province were uniform during periods of successful warfare. On the other hand, /82/ one can observe almost daily on the blazon straps that

[721]

[Warrior Ethal]

[FTI cont.]

701
574
[534] fighting, large log bells (ci shulles hires), the tinkling of which in the latter instance serves to prevent a going away by the individual warriors and a scattering of the troops. Where the bell sounds is a rallying point.

[556] A special position is also occupied by the g ghimini = benefactor. They are warriors who, themselves generous, also have a generous, well-to-do father. From him they often receive arms for slaughtering and then distribute the meat among their comrades and all strangers, without distinction as to age and sex. If such a benefactor is wounded in battle or if he suffers an injury elsewhere on the march or at home, the others are concerned about him and conspire with one another to help him to the best of their ability.

• 701
703
977 Accordingly, criminalness is sharply condemned, and a minority warrior or one who has minority powers is treated badly and, in case of illness or wounding on the way, is not infrequently left to his helplessness.

701
978
[554] Speaker and leader live like other warriors and are not surrounded by any special ceremonial. On duty they are treated with respect, which is shown especially by the fact that people avoid coming too close to their girls or lightly smiling an excuse for a quarrel with them. Among the other warriors these two things almost daily lead to serious disputes and often enough to duelling, in which the opponents go after each other with sword and club, but only very rarely wound each other seriously. If this should happen sometimes, in a few districts the wounded one receives from the victor a fine consisting of livestock; in other districts, only if a horse is broken. In general immediately after the duel /55/ sometimes only after the healing of the wound, reconciliation follows, the formality of which consists of the mutual exchange of wandel things and sometimes also the exchange of the skin cape (a neghi). The matter becomes more serious if one is killed in a duel. First the father of the victor is then condemned to pay a larger number of cattle. If he hands them over, the affair is settled. If he refuses them, however, the friends of the one killed attack his herd and rob him of his entire herd. But they have exactly brought them home before the friends of the one robbed also try to rob them again. This goes on until they have become tired

[43] would each other seriously. If this should happen sometimes, in a few districts the wounded one receives from the victor a fine consisting of livestock; in other districts, only if a horse is broken. In general immediately after the duel /55/ sometimes only after the healing of the wound, reconciliation follows, the formality of which consists of the mutual exchange of wandel things and sometimes also the exchange of the skin cape (a neghi). The matter becomes more serious if one is killed in a duel. First the father of the victor is then condemned to pay a larger number of cattle. If he hands them over, the affair is settled. If he refuses them, however, the friends of the one killed attack his herd and rob him of his entire herd. But they have exactly brought them home before the friends of the one robbed also try to rob them again. This goes on until they have become tired

[431] would each other seriously. If this should happen sometimes, in a few districts the wounded one receives from the victor a fine consisting of livestock; in other districts, only if a horse is broken. In general immediately after the duel /55/ sometimes only after the healing of the wound, reconciliation follows, the formality of which consists of the mutual exchange of wandel things and sometimes also the exchange of the skin cape (a neghi). The matter becomes more serious if one is killed in a duel. First the father of the victor is then condemned to pay a larger number of cattle. If he hands them over, the affair is settled. If he refuses them, however, the friends of the one killed attack his herd and rob him of his entire herd. But they have exactly brought them home before the friends of the one robbed also try to rob them again. This goes on until they have become tired

701
578
b72 would each other seriously. If this should happen sometimes, in a few districts the wounded one receives from the victor a fine consisting of livestock; in other districts, only if a horse is broken. In general immediately after the duel /55/ sometimes only after the healing of the wound, reconciliation follows, the formality of which consists of the mutual exchange of wandel things and sometimes also the exchange of the skin cape (a neghi). The matter becomes more serious if one is killed in a duel. First the father of the victor is then condemned to pay a larger number of cattle. If he hands them over, the affair is settled. If he refuses them, however, the friends of the one killed attack his herd and rob him of his entire herd. But they have exactly brought them home before the friends of the one robbed also try to rob them again. This goes on until they have become tired

721 721 cont.

721 on horse, the on horse. For the warriors this custom of these or five
724 leather strips cut from the spurs of their favorite girls, which are
724 adorned with stitched-on beads and, beside them, tied-on pieces of wood
(from twigs of the at at and at at wood), while the leaders
were as on horse the on horse takes the loss of a married man or his
fly catch. The on horse obliges every warrior to take part in the ex-
pedition. Anyone who nevertheless stays away out of fear is most
deeply despised and outcast: any warrior may kill him without
penalty. In order to give the faithless the courage, the most daring
man not infrequently sticks a ball, which has a diameter of 10-12
centimeters and is made out of black antler bark, on the tips of
their spears. Through this they express their firm determination to
attack the opponent and to stand up to him in head-to-head combat,
for the ball may be removed from the spear point only by one's ramming
it into the body of the enemy.

721 The purpose of a war is always only the capture of livestock, and,
to be sure, only cattle. War is not undertaken for grain and sheep.
Boys may go to steal small livestock! Only the capture of cattle is
worthy of a warrior: he only takes small livestock along as well when
he can directly achieve this together with the cattle.

721 In order to get permission for the war expedition, the speakers
721 together debate discussion to the at at and put before him the
wishes of the warriors. None of the latter accompany them, since
they would behave too unbecomingly in the presence of the great man,
who wishes calmness and clarity in the consultation.

721 721 The at at keeps himself accurately informed both about
721 the strength of the individual warrior bands and about all the condi-
721 tions of the surrounding territory when coming into consideration for
a war, so that he is in a very good position to judge accurately the
prospects of victory for either side with great probability. He also
keeps himself posted about contemporary and secondary matters with
regard to the opponent and weaves all this knowledge skilfully to-
gether in his account, so that it sounds like a man's pronouncement and is
taken as such by the speakers and warriors. His answer -- so the
speakers report it -- runs, for example: "You will attack the Kake
area: it is strong, and you will therefore first build a twelve-day

727 728 cont./
 it be the night. These captives are not taken. The men from the enemy who can be taken are killed, but not mutilated; the women, on the contrary, are usually spared and freed. It also happens, however, that these warriors who are undertaking their first expedition also strike down women, in order not to return as empty alms. But even in this case pregnant women are spared, for it is believed that God punishes the murderer of a pregnant woman by the death of his own children. Only very exceptionally does one take along a few women or children. The latter, however, do not become slaves; rather, the captured woman very soon becomes the lawful wife of the one who captured her, just as he also regards the kidnapped child exactly like his own. A ceremony of adoption does not exist; the man simply hands the child over to his wife, who treats it like her own. The next day they march on toward the home lands: in the evening a fire fence is again built, and at the same time the store of the booty destined for the el rumu is set apart. The total booty of every war expedition is given a name. This is determined on the second evening, while the men are eating. It is called, for example, Alima, because men fell on both sides. Other names are Aligila if the prisoners in living livestock taken along on the expedition did not last, and the warriors, out of hunger and contrary to the existing custom, had to eat tree fruits; Aligila if the el rumu suffered on the way because of a shortage of water; Aligila, derived from the call gumigila gum, that is, approximately: "only courage, if it is not possible, what does it matter," a frequent saying of one believes oneself inferior to the opponent in strength. The next morning, early, before the departure, the leaders distribute the booty



Illustration

Ill. 45. On picket duty.

(41) (101) (102) (103) (104) (105) (106) (107) (108) (109) (110) (111) (112) (113) (114) (115) (116) (117) (118) (119) (120) (121) (122) (123) (124) (125) (126) (127) (128) (129) (130) (131) (132) (133) (134) (135) (136) (137) (138) (139) (140) (141) (142) (143) (144) (145) (146) (147) (148) (149) (150) (151) (152) (153) (154) (155) (156) (157) (158) (159) (160) (161) (162) (163) (164) (165) (166) (167) (168) (169) (170) (171) (172) (173) (174) (175) (176) (177) (178) (179) (180) (181) (182) (183) (184) (185) (186) (187) (188) (189) (190) (191) (192) (193) (194) (195) (196) (197) (198) (199) (200)

• (103) if one believes oneself inferior to the opponent in strength. The next morning, early, before the departure, the leaders distribute the booty

/98 cont./

727
• [703] in shares as equal as possible; one warrior receives as much as the other, but before that a few head of cattle are distributed as a special reward and first to those warriors who killed an enemy in battle, then to the benefactors (d gamisini), then to the one who captured the first head of cattle and to the spies who went ahead (ai aigedaisi), and finally to the wounded, each of whom is entitled to the head of cattle that he marked with the blood gushing out of the wound. The number of cattle that the individual of the ones mentioned receives, except for the last who is entitled to only one head of cattle, is determined by the size of the booty and the proportion of the size of the booty's parts according to the above order of succession. /99/ Every warrior strives as quickly as possible to drive off from the others his share of the booty, but each one also tries to take along with it one or more head not belonging to him. This, of course, gives rise to another brawl, in which there are almost always several wounded men. If the booty is too small for an equal division, the warriors form two parties, on the one side the El muleljan, on the other the 'L aiser and El meigana. The former have as slaughtering cry the term gdo modgi = the red cattle, the latter the term nank gatai = the black cattle, after which they are also sometimes named (for example, I heard it in songs). A fight decides which one of the two parties receives the entire booty.

722 At home in the kraals it was very quiet during the warriors' absence. After the farewell, those remaining behind went home, each somewhat heavy-hearted in the anxiety about a son or lover, which, however, was soon more or less pushed into the background by the expectation of the spoils that they would bring back. Soon after the farewell the old man was again squatting in quiet contemplation in front of his hut and chasing away from his face and head, also as before, with a fly switch (ai enjua, ai enjua) (Fig. 20) consisting of a gnu's tail, the flies constituting a veritable plague in the Masai kraals. Then he took a hair from the switch and made a knot in it for each of his sons who had gone to war,



Fig. 20